Philippine Literature in Spanish at the Periphery of the Canon

Nationalism, Transnationalism, Postnationalism, and Genres

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The fifth centennial of the first circumnavigation of the globe (2019–21) brought with it an interesting situation. While Spain, Portugal, and the Philippines were all organizing events to commemorate the beginning of an interconnected world and the contact of distant cultures, each country was internally pursuing its own nationalist agenda. Spain and Portugal were competing to prove who the protagonist of the first circumnavigation had been—either the Basque Juan Sebastian Elcano or the Portuguese Ferdinand Magellan—as both countries were eager to add that point to their respective national feats.[1] On the other hand, while the Iberian countries whitewashed their colonial history by organizing events around the contact of cultures, the benefits of globalization, and, in the case of Spain, old ties of friendship with the Philippines,[2] the Philippines themselves approached the commemoration with harsh criticism of colonial imposition. This point of view challenged the Eurocentric account of events, not least by bringing to Spain the version of history that claimed the first global circumnavigation for the Malay Enrique de Malacca instead of Magellan or Elcano.[3]

These disputes show that the approach to global interconnectivity is still nationalistic and inclined to recycle colonialist discourses that assume hierarchies in the value of knowledge and the direction in which it was spread. This political approach has fed back the study methods traditionally used to teach and learn cultural expressions, so that they are also based on the compartmentalization of knowledge and the study of nationalistic literature. This

interest seems to surface in books such as Luis Mariñas's *La literatura filipina en castellano*, which explains some achievements in Fil-Hispanic literature as a result of Spanish influence (1974),[4] and Adam Lifshey's *Subversions of the American Century*, which claims Fil-Hispanic literature of the early 20th century as part of US national literature.

However, the study of national literatures in isolation clashes with the interconnected reality, in which we see diasporic literatures or travelogues that may challenge the idea of national adscriptions. It also creates a problem with Fil-Hispanic literature,[5] which has been marginalized in literary history and its teaching: partly due to the Eurocentric character that literature courses have had until recently in most educative institutions of Europe, America, and the Philippines themselves and partly to the compartmentalization of literary history into national categories. With this approach to literary history, Philippine literature in Spanish has had a difficult fit. It has also been further marginalized by the field of Hispanic studies, which has been traditionally divided into Spanish Peninsular literature and Latin American literature, leaving out cultural productions in Spanish from Africa and Asia.

This difficulty for Fil-Hispanic literature to find a fit into a nationalistic literary history is caused by two main circumstances. First, the Philippines were a colonial archipelago during the period of national identity formation in the 19th century. Yolanda Martínez-San Miguel suggests that during the time when the idea of the nation was formed in the Philippines and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean, intellectuals from both archipelagos were living in Spain, forming a diasporic community. Therefore, displacement and ambivalence toward the metropolis and the island where some of the colonial writers had been born constituted a foundational motif in the narrative of the nation (2014, 42). More than this, archipelagic thought adds to this firsthand knowledge of the paradigms of the metropolis and brings ambivalence between the idea of national unity and the acknowledgment of diversity among inhabitants of the archipelago, according to Édouard Glissant (1997, 31). The inventors of the nation would therefore have struggled between identification with the metropolis and identification with the different facets of the unstable heterogeneous reality of the Philippines, while looking for international affiliations beyond Spain.[6] The birth of the nation had, therefore, a multifaceted construction that led to the crystallization of the question of what Filipino identity is (Zialcita 2005, 6).

The second circumstance is the development of the archipelago as a hub for the contact of cultures and international trade. Marlon James Sales calls

it an "entrepôt," as he links it to the trading tradition in the area (2014, 171), while Irene Villaescusa refers to it as a "Contact Zone," a term borrowed from Mary Louise Pratt (2020, 24).[7] For Villaescusa, Philippine nationalism is rooted in transculturality because of the multiple bonds with other cultures, which transformed the country in the first half of the 20th century (2020, 4). This is partly due to the country's location on the periphery of Asia, between the Indian and Pacific Oceans. This border situation drew Indians, Arabs, Malays, and Chinese to the region before the arrival of the European ships. Later, from 1565 onward, it became a commercial hub between Asia, America, and Europe with the launching of the Manila Galleon route. Cultural contact led to miscegenation, a search for bonds with other regions, diasporic movements, and the blurring of cultural borders, all of which also brings into question the very idea of national literature not just in the Philippines but in different literary traditions around the world.

The concept of national literature was challenged by figures such as Jesús Balmori (1886–1948), an icon of the search for literary and cultural links beyond the nation. Born in the colonial Philippines under Spanish rule, he built most of his career during American rule. He was a deep admirer of Japan until World War II (although his ambivalence still prevailed even during the Japanese occupation of his country [Gasquet 2020, 48–51]), and he developed a special kind of orientalism in his poems, based on the identification of the Philippines with the exotic Orient of the *modernista* poems written by Latin American authors. In 1931, he went to Mexico intending to establish links with poets there—whom he expected to still be *modernistas*—and with the self-imposed mission of giving a public lecture about Japan. However, he was also a nationalist deeply committed to the Philippines' independence, of which he only saw two years. The topics of his poems and the links that he created in his literature and articles with other Asian and Spanish-speaking regions made him a transnational agent (Villaescusa 2020).

Another challenging figure is that of Adelina Gurrea (1896–1970). She was the daughter of Ramona Monasterio Pozo, born in Zamora, Spain, and of Carlos Gurrea Candela, born in the Philippines to a Spanish father and a mestiza mother. In 1921, when she was 25, she traveled to Spain, where she stayed for 37 years (until 1958) and published all her books. Despite the long stay in Spain, she always identified herself as a Filipina.

Besides the challenges made by these and other individual figures, a large array of genres testify to the movements of individuals between nations and again question the isolation of the national culture implied by national litera-

tures. Travel books like that of María Paz Mendoza Guazón (1884–1967) are paradigmatic, but we also sometimes find memoirs or welcome speeches to foreign emissaries that are authentic essays that work on the Philippines' narrative linkage with other cultures. Such is the case of Rosa Sevilla de Alvero's speeches, still unpublished. All this has led to a sense of national identity that is questioned but also developed often in literary works.

In this context, the first objective of this book is to propose a study of Philippine literary production in Spanish stemming from its relationship with other cultures, literature, and arts. In this way, we attempt to break the nation's isolation and show how it is part of, and relevant to, the broad system of literature written in Spanish, but without claiming the ascendence of any country on it. We believe that by showing the connections of Philippine literature with other literatures, the study of Asian and Hispanic traditions will find a space for it within them. This objective is favored by currents alternative to the study of national literatures that are emerging nowadays, connected to the crisis of the nation-state. The "crisis of the nation-state" is a concept that grew popular in the 1990s in the shadow of postmodernism (Berman [1982] 2010) and is linked to the deficiencies of decolonization in the 1960s, globalizing economic alliances and policies, and the technology that has improved traveling and communications. During the tumultuous debate on the validity of the idea of the nation, John Dunn wrote the article titled "Introduction: Crisis of the Nation State?," posed as a question and starting from the idea that nation-states, as they have traditionally been defined, do not exist (1994, 3).[8] The theory behind it had been pinned down from Marxist theory, specifically to the history of Southeast Asia, by Benedict Anderson, who had given an acclaimed definition of the nation as an imagined community (1983).

Departing from this "crisis" situation, Jürgen Habermas proposed scenarios to safeguard democracy in the context of globalization in a book called *The Postnational Constellation* (1998). There, he spelled out the twofold pressure that globalization puts on the nation-state. On the one hand, there is external pressure from commercial and political agreements with other states that affect the self-determination of the nation-state. On the other hand, there is internal pressure created by the influx of foreign people and products manufactured worldwide (84). His political solution was the transnationalization of democracy via higher public participation in the election of representatives within the decision-making institutions of multinational networks. This moves the boundaries of the nation-state so it can become more inclusive,

reaching territories further away from its original boundaries and connecting them in a kind of superstate.

Echoing that process, and applying it metaphorically to literature, Bernat Castany Prado proposed the notion of postnational literature as literature that reflects upon and creates dialogue with a worldwide society rather than a national one (2007), while Michel Le Bris put forward the concept of *littérature-monde*, "world literature" (2007). In the case of Philippine literature, these concepts have often been intrinsic to it throughout its history, not just nowadays as Castany suggests. Even if the main topic of Philippine texts written in Spanish was often national identity, as Villaescusa states, this national identity has been constructed by building bridges to other cultures as we have just argued.

Rather than simply thinking about Philippine literature as postnational, we propose taking a postnational approach to it, which in the case of Philippine literature should favor a match between the object of study and the methodology. This approach should overcome the constraints of the stagnant categories imposed by national borders, widening the scope to the relations with other regions, thereby lifting the boundaries between languages and offering a wider representation of other cultural productions not aligned with any blocks. Due to this wider representation of works, it should defy the Eurocentric canon and encourage the presence of decolonializing discourses that expose nationalist and (neo)colonialist actions (such as the Spanish-Portuguese competition for claiming the first circumnavigation). This way of considering Philippine literature converges with at least four emerging fields that have studied Spanish-speaking cultural production in or about the Philippines in a frame of intercultural entanglements: Spanish Asian studies, the Global Hispanophone, Transpacific studies, and Global South studies. They constitute some of the latest attempts to break the dichotomy of Hispanism into Peninsular and Latin American areas of study.

The first of these fields is what has been called "Spanish Asian studies" by Yeon-Soo Kim and Kathleen E. Davies. It was defined in the introduction to a special section that they coordinated in the *Arizona Journal of Hispanic Cultural Studies*, titled "Asia in the Hispanic World: The Other Orientalism." The field addresses "Spain's epistemological construction of Asia" (200). The founding article mentions past works that considered cultural interactions between the Philippines and Spain, namely, those by Robert Richmond Ellis (2012) and Joan Torres-Pou (2013), which mainly dealt with the construction of Spanish colonial discourse and the tensions between the Spanish represen-

tatives of colonial power and Filipino society in José Rizal's novels. However, the part related to the Philippines focuses on a center-periphery relationship that is not so obviously present in the other articles from the same volume, which study the epistemological construction of other Asian nations such as Japan and China. The decadence of Spain as an imperial power, and the orientalization to which it was subjected by other European countries, changed how Spain interacted with Asian countries so that it was no longer a center-periphery dynamic. This situation singularizes and problematizes the relationship of Spain with the Philippines and with the Chinese population in the Philippines, as it allows for breaches in the colonial discourse. The Philippine answer to these breaches will be seen in this book in Cristina Guillén Arnáiz's and Rocío Ortuño Casanova's contributions. The American republics, for their part, would also establish cultural ties with the Philippines and acknowledge some parallel situations in their processes of emancipation and identity construction, as is discussed in the chapters by Ernest Rafael Hartwell and Paula C. Park.

The second emerging field is what has been called the "Global Hispanophone." In his work *The Magellan Fallacy*, Adam Lifshey looks at Spanish-language literature from Asia and Africa. To justify the relationship between countries so far apart in the world, he proposes a series of categories that may serve as an umbrella for them: the term "Hispanophone" being useful to describe "literature in Spanish outside the binarism of Spain and Latin America" (2012, 21). "Global literature in Spanish" is the other notion proposed by Lifshey that "points to conceivable remappings of literature in Spanish not only beyond Latin America and Spain but also beyond Asia and Africa" (21). Seven years later, Adolfo Campoy-Cubillo and Benita Sampedro merged both ideas to draw the foundations of the field (and also its limitations) in their introductory article to the special section "Entering the Global Hispanophone" in the *Journal of Spanish Cultural Studies* (2019). To them, the Global Hispanophone "comes to incorporate the cultures and historical experiences of North Africa, Equatorial Guinea, and the Philippines, among other geographic entities: all territories that were once bound by the Spanish Empire, particularly as it existed beyond Latin America, the Caribbean and the Iberian Peninsula itself" (2019, 1). Although the idea of circulation is present in their introduction, it is not their main focus, and the authors cite volumes that consider the cultural output of the single groups included in their definition of Global Hispanophone. Therefore, they include articles that explore the Sahara, Morocco, the Philippines, Equatorial Guinea, and the Sephardic

diaspora, both individually and in terms of their relations with the Iberian Peninsula and Mexico. There is again a special emphasis on the relationship of the territories with the Iberian Peninsula, as colonization constitutes their departure point in linguistic matters and determines the language in which the writings are produced.

Transpacific studies, however, mainly considers postcolonial countries "in which interests revolve around efforts by formerly colonized states to achieve cultural, economic, and political sovereignty in their relation to the Pacific region, both as geographical sites and as a series of commercial, military and cultural routes" (Rowe 2014, 134). Although John Carlos Rowe, in the article from which the abovementioned quotation comes, leaves aside the Philippines, its insertion in the Pacific region, albeit liminal, and the relations that it has established with other cultures around the Pacific (starting with Mexico in 1565 with the Manilla Galleon route) make the Asian country an object of study in Transpacific studies.

In the same fashion, Global South studies would also include relations between the Philippines and Latin America beyond the Pacific, as the term refers to the connections between ex-colonial countries, leaving the old metropolises aside to focus on "relations among subaltern groups across national, linguistic, racial and ethnic lines" (Mahler 2017). This volume engages with all four of these fields (which sometimes overlap) but does not completely fit in any of them. We understand that, beyond the idea of literatures in contact and the study of literary relations, there is an inclination to use the idea of the Global Hispanophone to group cultures bound only by their shared former colonial master. This presents two dangers: contriving nonexistent associations and treating possible cultural relations or similarities as praiseworthy contributions made by colonialism.

If the Global Hispanophone provides us with a sufficiently important academic space to prevent the Philippine written production from remaining an academic niche, the book's place in the previous currents is also the result of the relationships that this production establishes with other cultures outside the Hispanic sphere of influence. In addition, we believe that the studies present in this book open up new comparisons and a new vision of other former Spanish colonies. It is for this reason that we have chosen not to fit the book totally into any of the existing emerging fields but rather to talk about it using a postnational frame.

This is justified and concretized in the transcultural contacts studied in this volume. Luis Castellví Laukamp, for instance, in his chapter approaches

how missionary chronicles bear witness to the colonial imposition of Christianity on the islands and reflect the encounters between the preacher and the unknown, which were assimilated as supernatural issues. In her chapter, Ana M. Rodríguez-Rodríguez examines the narrative of confrontations with Muslims in the early days of colonization, which are compared with episodes from the so-called Reconquest of Spain from the Muslims (711–1492). The narratives of confrontations with Muslims in the Philippines would link the country to West Asia. This connection was later highlighted by *modernista* poets in the 20th century. The rewritings of the colonial confrontations also took place from the Philippine side, as can be seen in the chapter by Rocío Ortuño Casanova, who examines how the history of the pirate Limahong, a central figure in the Spanish chronicles on the Philippine conquest, was rewritten by Philippine intellectuals in the 19th and 20th centuries, with an eye on the identification of the Philippines with Asia. This identification implied a search for integration into a community of nations different from the Western colonial powers. The need for integration and the search for a supranational identity connect to the communities of nations proposed by Habermas in the essays of *The Postnational Constellation* and are reflected in several works such as José Rizal's letters, where he looked for the origins of the Philippine peoples in Southeast Asia. Claro M. Recto warned of the economic dangers of such an association for the Philippines in the essay *El monroísmo asiático* (1929), in which he foresaw the asymmetrical relationship that might be established in Asia with Japan as a leading power.

Despite the accounts of colonial relationships, the relationships displayed in the texts were not always asymmetrical. This can be seen in the chapters by Park and Hartwell, for instance, which explore contacts with Latin America as a space for decolonializing inspiration and identification. It is true, though, that such contacts often arose as a result of conflict and violence: even the folkloric texts that Isabelo de los Reyes collected at the end of the 19th century, which are examined by Kristina A. Escondo in her chapter, are connected with the violence of the Philippine Exhibition of 1887 and the urgency of making the Philippines known to the Spanish. De los Reyes, however, took advantage of this conflict to to stress the importance of the culture of the native peoples of the archipelago. One of the traits highlighted was an autochthonous, proto-feminist conception of the role of women in society, as opposed to that imposed by Catholicism, which surfaces in the poems written by de los Reyes's mother, Leona Florentino, translated into Spanish from her native Ilocano. Furthermore, out of the violence of colonization

and the cultural clash arose particular narrative forms that escape the input provided by each one of the cultures. It is thus that, in the narratives of the Battle of Manila, examined by Sony Coráñez Bolton and David R. George in their chapters, the violence of the confrontation with the Japanese troops is concretized in hybrid forms of original expression, which ultimately connect with genres that also occur in Latin America and do not fit into traditional literary taxonomies.

This connects with the second objective of the book, which consists of questioning the constraints of traditional literary genres to make place for Philippine texts, and other colonial and postcolonial texts, in the category of literature, so that those texts can be taken into consideration in literary studies. This is the case with writings by authors such as Teodoro M. Kálaw (1884–1940) and Rafael Palma (1874–1939), two of the standard figures in 20th-century school anthologies of Philippine literature in Spanish. None of the books that they wrote or edited would incontestably be considered literature. Neither, probably, would those of Jaime de Veyra, Paz Mendoza Guazón, or Epifanio de los Santos[9] or, from the *ilustrado* generation, those of Isabelo de los Reyes or Marcelo Hilario del Pilar, to give some examples. The repertoire of all of these important Philippine authors comprises biographies, letters, essays, opinion columns, studies and compilations of Philippine folklore, and travel books. These are all genres that, in most cases, have been only considered relevant in the fields of history, anthropology, sociology, or political science. For literary studies they are considered "hybrid," not fitting into any literary genre. They are, however, fundamental to reflect the political and social objective of shaping a national identity under colonial occupation, negotiating its position concerning the colonizer and the rest of the world, and spreading these views among a large audience.

In terms of distinction and the sociology of culture, purely creative and literary texts generally hold a higher place in the literary fields of European metropolises than do those containing a message and an intention that are more than purely literary—that is to say, autotelism and the principle of self-referentiality prevail in the literary field (Sapiro 2016, 38). Accordingly, works with political ends are often relegated to an inferior position on the basis that they depart from the description of the "full and fundamental human experience" (Speller 2013, 18), as was noted by Raymond Williams, who in his classic book *Marxism and Literature* advocates literary texts' capacity for ideological expression and an inclusive definition of literature (Speller 2013, 18). The paradox also lies in the fact that extraliterary forces end up

intervening in and conditioning internal conflicts in the field "according to ethical, political or economic criteria to which aesthetic stakes are subordinated" (Sapiro 2016, 38). In the case of Philippine literature, these extraliterary forces were related to colonial imposition and to the reaction to it, which even determined the selection of authors included in the Philippine canon. In the section "Philippine Literature" in the *Encyclopedia of the Cultural Center of the Philippines*, a reference work on Philippine arts, we find that of the 54 writers who produced literature in Spanish included in the work, 21 held political positions and 22 held military positions (Ortuño Casanova 2017). This trend can also be confirmed in the case of the authors whom Kálaw and Palma edited, prefaced, and biographized: Apolinario Mabini, Marcelo H. del Pilar, and Mariano Ponce played prominent military roles in the Philippine Revolution, while José Rizal was an ideologue (although opposed to the armed struggle) and martyr of it. This creates the impression of marginalization within the Philippine literary field of authors who did not openly express a nationalist political intention in their works.

Beyond the forces operative in the formation of the canon, extraliterary forces are another element that encourages the development of one genre or another. The Spanish-language Philippine literature that was produced during the US occupation has developed a dimension of resistance against the Americanization of the country. It implies that at that moment they had to answer the situation with genres that fostered resistance and favored particular strategies of national narration and negotiation regarding the positioning of the country and its relations with others. These genres and strategies were in many cases inherited from the anti-colonial resistance to Spain that the previous generation had undertaken. Some of these national and anticolonial narrative strategies entailed the recovery of a pre-Hispanic textual corpus that was used to define the nation. Others included the previously discussed affiliation with certain regions in geopolitical equilibria, the collection of inspirational data from other countries to build Philippine modernity, the construction of national heroes and national allegories with which the Philippine people could identify, and the testimonies of abuses of colonial power.

The first of those strategies, namely, recovering pre-Hispanic histories of oral tradition, was Isabelo de los Reyes's great undertaking. He compiled, in addition to the two-volume *Historia de Ilocos*, the masterful *El folk-lore filipino* (1889), whose publication coincided with the 1887 Philippine Exhibition in Madrid. The work unveils popular fictional narratives as well as Spanish translations of some of the poetry written by his mother, Leona Florentino.

El folk-lore filipino is difficult to define in terms of genre. Although folklorists have links to anthropologists, the compilation contains historical contextualization and works of fiction and poetry. The case of Adelina Gurrea's *Los cuentos de Juana* is somehow clearer. It was also published in Madrid, 55 years after Isabelo de los Reyes's work. *Los cuentos de Juana* is an anthology woven from Philippine folk stories that ultimately, as with the work of de los Reyes, constitutes a pre-Hispanic Philippine mythological catalog, though it is also a fiction anthology. Kristina A. Escondo's chapter in this volume considers both works, those of Gurrea and de los Reyes, and their role in national construction. Shorter and later works, such as *Leyendas filipinas*, written by Araceli Pons and Leonor Agrava and also published in Spain in 1955, pursued a similar goal.

The essay also underwent major development at the time of the American occupation, with volumes such as *La campaña del Kuomintang* (Kalaw 1928) and *El monroísmo asiático* (Recto 1929) but above all with serialized shorter essays published in the press. Essays, opinion articles, and mixtures of both once more proposed models of relationships with other countries and regions, returning us to the idea of a postnational integration of the Philippines. Serialized essays followed the model of the series of articles that were published in *La solidaridad* in the 19th century, such as the series of six articles on Spain and Japan in the Philippines by Marcelo H. del Pilar, which were compiled (after his death and Philippine independence) in the second volume of his *Escritos* (1970).

T. H. Pardo de Tavera (1916; Gasquet 2021), Mendoza Guazón (1930; Villaescusa-Illán 2018), and Jesús Balmori (Gasquet 2020) compiled experiences in their writings—both their own experiences and those of other travelers who had visited similar destinations—to draft a destiny willed for the Philippines. Magazines and newspapers had a broad didactic and disseminating function that gave immediacy to the impact of what was presented but also allowed a certain evolution of the work that was being developed over a longer period. Accordingly, Balmori's travel impressions (considered in Park's chapter), which were published in 1932 in a narrative form (his journey started in May 1931), changed to become a series of poems from the episode covering his arrival in Mexico. In these poems, Balmori contrasted the expectations of Hispanicity with the Mexican reality as seen through the eyes of the Filipino, disappointed at not finding modernist poets in 1931–32, in a more or less humorous way.

Perhaps one of the most original genres discussed in this book is the

abovementioned testimony. Sony Coráñez Bolton investigates the expression of trauma after the Battle of Manila in World War II in José Reyes's book *Terrorismo y Redención*, a work that is quite similar in terms of form and theme to Antonio Pérez de Olaguer's *El terror amarillo en Filipinas*, which is considered in David R. George's chapter. It is also close to the short story "Nuestros últimos cinco días bajo el yugo Nipón," written by Paz Zamora Mascuñana, which had been previously studied by Rocío Ortuño (Zamora Mascuñana 1960; Ortuño Casanova 2018). All these works present a narrative of the self that gives a voice to other historical protagonists. José Reyes does so by interspersing excerpts of interviews, lists, original documents, and poems in a work that is akin to a war scrapbook. Coráñez Bolton describes the genre as "Philippine Testimony": short personal narratives about the traumatic event of Manila's destruction, which sometimes contradict the official version—that is, America's version. This narrative simultaneously describes the trauma and negotiates the clash among three cultures: American, Japanese, and Filipino. Interestingly, poetry, a genre entirely recognized as literary, approaches the same topic in a similar way—that is, from the expression of the self in the first person and a very particular narration that combines the chronicle and the fiction. Two examples of the poetic accounts of World War II in Manila are Guillermo Gómez Windham's poem in *Terrorismo y Redención* and the longer poem *Mi bandera: Poema de la victoria* by José Hernández Gavira (1945). This latter work has an epic tone and draws parallels between World Wars I and II, the Philippine Revolution, and the war fought for Philippine independence between 1898 and 1902.

Poetry is, in fact, sometimes also used as an instrument for other political causes already discussed. Poems such as "Oración al dios Apolo" (Recto 1911), "Mi raza" and "El terror de los mares índicos" (Apóstol 1950), and *De Mactán a Tirad* (Zaragoza Cano 1941) fulfill the function of revisiting the Philippines' history and claiming pre-Hispanic mythologies and heroes in a process of rewriting the Hispanic chronicles. Many of the poetic compilations in Spanish also include poems and even whole sections dedicated to the heroes of the revolution: Rizal, Bonifacio, Aguinaldo, and del Pilar (Hilario 1914; Bernabé 1929; Guerrero 1971; Apóstol 1950). The memory of these heroes and the patriotic inspiration that they trigger are also conveyed in the published biographies about them. In this volume, Ortuño Casanova studies the reevaluation of some chronicles—studied as literature by John D. Blanco, Rodríguez, and Castellví Leukamp—including Cecilio Apóstol's poem "El terror de los mares índicos."

Biographies, travel books, and essay collections alike are genres that have been considered hybrid or frictional, and their inclusion as literature depends on how broadly the word "literature" is defined. However, these genres were selected to communicate the needs and concerns of the region. As Brander states, "Genres are both formed by processes of communication and flow into them" (2017, 17). They are structuring elements of discursive interactions, which are in turn structured by them in the search for a literary solution to circumstances different from those of Europe. The taxonomic and closed system of European genres defined in the 18th century expanded across the world via colonialism. At that time, the indigenous literary forms of the colonized territories that did not fit into European taxonomies were declared "oral literature" and occupied a lesser place in the system (Brander 2017), while colonized subjects ended up imitating and subverting these traditional genres to adapt them to their needs. Therefore, in the Philippines, autochthonous literature takes the form of genres such as *komedya*, *Senákulo*—widely criticized by Spaniards like Vicente Barrantes (1889)—*sarswela*, and *korido*. The latter is an assimilation of Philippine literary forms to the corrido genre (the Mexican version of romance), which expresses heroic legends of characters who often come from the Hispanic tradition in autochthonous languages. Some examples coming from the Hispanic tradition are the stories of the seven Lara princes or Bernardo Carpio, which are syncretized with traditions of their own. Literary syncretism has become fundamental not only in the history of Philippine literature but also in the conception of the Philippine world and movements, as Reynaldo Ileto (1979) theorizes about the popular narrative used for the first time by Gaspar Aquino de Belén in *Pasyon*. This work, which depicts the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and is sung uninterrupted for days during Lent and Holy Week, originates, according to Fernando Zialcita, from the uninterrupted chanting sessions that were organized around dead datus (2006). The transformation of the ritual through its adaptation to the imposition of Christianity reflects, according to Ileto (1979), the idea that the Philippine masses have of the revolution as a passage from darkness to light, and it explains some of the great political changes in the archipelago's recent history.

Alongside the hybrid genres of the literary production of the late 19th and early 20th centuries sit genres that are no longer considered hybrids, such as the novel.[10] These convey national allegories and follow the model of the previous enlightened generation. Accordingly, we find novels and plays that contain characters and allegorical stories of the nation but also weave,

like biographies, essays, and travel books do, subtle intercultural relationships that are not always necessarily marked by the colonial vertical hierarchy and that sometimes reevaluate the relationships established by the colonizers.

It is therefore relevant to speak of all these works as literary, despite their intentions and especially despite the hybridity of their genre, since this hybridity is inherent to Philippine literature in Spanish, as Marlon James Sales explains in his chapter devoted to translation as a language of Philippine literature in Spanish.

The book is divided into five parts. In the first part, "Transnational Grounds of Philippine Literature in Spanish," the authors propose a redefinition of Philippine literature in line with its origins, the language in which it developed, and the affiliations it created. This part also puts forward theoretical questions such as the literary nature of the missionary chronicles, their fit as Philippine literature, the name that this literature should be given, and their role within the so-called *hispanidad*, establishing certain bases that summarize and challenge some previous ideas about the topic scattered in works such as *Hispanofilia filipina* (Fernández Lumba 1981) and *Literatura hispanofilipina actual* (Donoso and Gallo 2011).

The second part, "The (Re)Conquest of History," offers a literary approach to three ethnic groups in the Philippines: Tagalogs, Chinese, and Muslims. This approach involves a twofold perspective: all three chapters have the Spanish chronicles on the Philippines as their departure point. In Ana Rodríguez's chapter, the Spanish chronicles on the conquests of Mindanao and Sulu compare confrontations with Philippine Muslims with other accounts of Christian crusades against Islam, in an attempt to distance the experience of the "Philippine Moors" from the paradigms of Andalusian Muslims and Ottomans. In doing so, the Philippine chronicles propose new ways of approaching Islam.

In their chapters, Luis Castellví Leukamp and Rocío Ortuño Casanova approach texts written by Filipinos in the 19th and the 20th centuries, which reevaluate some chronicles of Spanish confrontations with Tagalogs and Chinese. These texts converge in the intention of *reconquering* history, a process described by Christopher Schmidt-Nowara (2006) in which he includes the annotated edition done by José Rizal of the chronicles on the Philippines, written originally by Antonio de Morga in the 17th century (Morga and Rizal 1890). Both this work and the Philippine texts studied imply processes of negotiation, assimilation, reassessment, and historical updating that suppose an appropriation of Philippine historical accounts written by others.

The third part, "Modernity and Globalization," is based on the passage to

modernity and Philippine identity within this modernity. Kristina A. Escondo's work introduces two texts that seek to highlight Philippine folklore in a tumultuous time of change, reaffirming an individuality that in both cases opposes movements demanding the appropriation of the archipelago by the Spanish government. Isabelo de los Reyes's *El folk-lore filipino* was published at the end of the 19th century. At that time, Spain had decided to reevaluate its activities in the Philippines and intended a commercial turn for the colonization. This came together with a propaganda campaign in Spain to spread knowledge of the Asian archipelago. The Philippine Exhibition of 1887 in Madrid, together with the many publications on the Philippines that it spawned, sought to make the territory known to new investors. In the 1940s, when *Cuentos de Juana*, the second text studied by Escondo, was published, the Spanish Fascist Party "Falange" had just been included in Spain's dictatorial regime after the Spanish Civil War (1936–39). Among its claims was the country's "imperial vocation." The problem was that, in reality, most of the regions that the old Spanish Empire comprised were at that time republics opposed to the fascist regime of dictator Francisco Franco, which most of the Philippine Spanish-speaking intelligentsia supported. The need of ties with the old colonies led to a renewed visibility of the Philippines in the Spanish press, literature, and film, partly driven by institutions (Ortuño Casanova 2021). The stories told in those media were used to reinforce the so-called *white legend*, which lauded the beneficial influence that colonialization had had on the archipelago. In the face of both situations and as a reaction to them, the folkloric texts asserted the prevalence of a pre-Hispanic Philippine identity, leading the country outside the Hispanic orbit. The chapter by meLê yamomo, on the other hand, offers the opposite point of view, asserting the metropolitan modernity of the Philippines in the late 20th century, along with the assimilation of colonial sounds.

The fourth part of the book, "Anti-Colonial Writings in the Colonial Language," includes two chapters on writings that use colonial language for an anti-colonial discourse. Cristina Guillén Arnáiz's chapter studies the humorous chronicle of the trip taken by the Filipino Antonio Luna to Madrid, which caricatures the colonial chronicles through subversion of them, and Ernest Rafael Hartwell explores the late 19th-century anti-colonial networks involving the Philippines and the Caribbean from a biopolitical point of view, focusing on common stylistic resources for describing immigrants.

The last part, "Narratives of the Self and World War II," considers two examples of narratives of the self that address, through the overlapping of genres, the trauma of experiencing the Japanese invasion and the Battle of

Manila. David R. George inquires about the life of Antonio Pérez de Olaguer, a Barcelona native of Filipino descent who took multiple trips to the archipelago in search of his origins. Pérez de Olaguer described this process in autobiographical texts such as *Hospital de San Lázaro*, *Mi vuelta al mundo*, and *El terror amarillo en Filipinas*, the text that narrates the painful experience of the Battle of Manila in World War II. Sony Coráñez Bolton examines the testimony of the same event written by José Reyes in a book that is related to testimonial literature in Latin America, whose location between reality and fiction is still debated.

In total, this book contains 12 chapters that elaborate on the abovementioned problems surrounding the cultural and identity relations of the Philippines with other regions and the literary nature of Philippine texts. These problems are applicable to other postcolonial nations; therefore, these chapters are key to understanding literature as a fluctuation and negotiation of borders and identity outside the Western (ex-)colonialist powers.

Notes

1. References to the anniversary of the circumnavigation in the Portuguese press only mention Magellan as head of the expedition. We can find examples on Portuguese official sites such as the Cultural Commission of the Portuguese Marine website, which titles the special reporting of the event "A volta ao mundo de Magalhães" (Comissão Cultural de Marinha 2019), or on the website dedicated to the fifth centennial of the circumnavigation in Portugal, titled "500 years: Magellan's Circumnavigation" (Missão do V Centenário da Primeira Viagem de Circum-Navegação 2019), as well as in the newspapers (Garcia 2020). Meanwhile, official sites in Spain tend to talk about the circumnavigation without mentioning any protagonists, as is the case with their website on the fifth centennial of the circumnavigation (2019) and the exhibition devoted to the event in Seville, which is introduced by a quote from a letter by Juan Sebastián Elcano (https://www.espacioprimeravueltaalmundo.org/la-primera-vuelta-al-mundo-1519-1522/). Spanish media, however, either includes both names, Elcano and Magellan, in the articles on the ephemerid as initially agreed on by both countries ("El V Centenario de la primera vuelta al mundo, a debate" 2019; Fernández 2019; Astolfi 2021; Alonso 2019) or drops Magellan, just leaving Elcano (Soler Quintana 2021). Neither Portuguese nor Spanish sites mention Henry of Malacca.

2. Since 2003, Spanish-Filipino Friendship Day has been celebrated every year on June 30, the anniversary of the release of some soldiers who had gotten trapped in a church in Baler during the Philippine revolution of 1898 and who had refused to recognize the end of the war. The cultural products commemorating this event seem to be endless: two films, at least one documentary, a very long list of literary and scholarly books, and a statue devoted to the Spanish soldiers erected in Madrid in 2020 (de la Cruz 2021).

3. Three events exemplify this dissent against the efforts of European official voices. The first was promoted by the Philippine Embassy in Madrid, which produced a video

based on the illustrated book *First Around the Globe: The Story of Enrique* and organized online debates to explore the idea that the slave was a Filipino (Roxas and Singer 1997; Philippine Embassy in Madrid 2020). The second event was an online conference called "Contacts & Continuities: 500 Years of Asian-Iberian Encounters," organized by Ateneo de Manila University in cooperation with Centro de Humanidades of the Universidade Nova de Lisboa, in Portugal, and the National Historical Commission of the Philippines. Despite the title and description of the conference, which marked a certain continuity with a first meeting organized in Lisbon, the organization subverted its initial image by carefully choosing the participants, who included keynote speakers highly critical of the colonial discourses on the Philippines, such as Vicente Rafael and Ambeth Ocampo. In this way, the talks moved away from the well-worn Eurocentric paths that often conclude with the idea that the European invasion was beneficial for the colonized peoples. At the same time, a virtual festival called the "Henry of Malacca Virtual Festival" was organized. There, planners screened the work *Black Henry* by Luis Francia and exchanged views with filmmakers who had made films about this character, such as Pedro Palma, director of *Henry of Malacca: A Malay and Magellan* (2020); and Kidlat Tahimik, director and protagonist of *Memories of Overdevelopment: A Film Sketch on Henry of Malacca* (1984). Tahimik is also the protagonist of the third event in question, no longer as a filmmaker but as a conceptual artist. In January 2021 he presented his installation "Magellan, Marilyn, Mickey and Friar Damaso: 500 years of RockStar conquerors" at the Crystal Palace of Retiro Park in Madrid (Tahimik 2021). The installation was an ironic criticism of the "civilization" brought by colonialism—a vindication of precolonial culture and, of course, of the figure of Enrique de Malacca, but also the reappropriation of a symbolic space of colonialism: the Crystal Palace had been built in 1887 as the setting for a large colonial exhibition on the Philippines in which native people were exhibited as if in a human zoo.

4. As an example, he attributes the arrival of modernism in the Philippines to the visit of the Spanish poet Salvador Rueda to the archipelago in 1915, ignoring the fact that in 1899 poems by Rubén Darío and other Latin American modernists were being published in the magazine *Libertas* of the University of Santo Tomás or that in 1908 there was a modernist literary magazine that detailed the different variants of Latin American *modernismo* called *Domus Aurea*.

5. When not using the more neutral "Philippine Literature in Spanish," we follow here Wystan de la Peña's nomenclature (2011), which in Spanish would translate as "Literatura hispanofilipina."

6. See the article "Panasiatismo y resistencia al discurso occidental en la literatura filipina en español" for more information on the interest of José Rizal and other Filipino intellectuals in finding connections with other Asian countries (Ortuño Casanova 2021, 12).

7. Mary Louise Pratt defines the *contact zone* as "social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power, such as colonialism, slavery, or their aftermath" (1991, 34).

8. The article begins by saying: "Nations consist of those who belong together by birth (genetically, lineally, through familially inherited language and culture). States consist of those who are fully subject to their own sovereign legal authority. A true nation-state, therefore, would consist only of those who belonged to it by birth and of those who were

fully subject to its sovereign legal authority. By this . . . criterion it is unlikely that there is a single nation-state in the world at present, and moderately unlikely that any such state has ever existed" (Dunn 1994, 3).

9. Jaime de Veyra wrote short historical essays like *¿Quién fue Urduja?* (1951) and miscellaneous books like *Efemérides filipinas* (1914), collecting opinion columns, stories, and historical narrative pieces written with Mariano Ponce, and edited other books such as *Pentélicas*, the poem compilation by Cecilio Apóstol (1950). Mendoza Guazón published, besides her travelogue *Notas de viaje* (1930), bilingual essays on the situation of women in the Philippines such as *My Ideal Filipino Girl* (1931) and contributions to newspapers. Epifanio de los Santos, like de Veyra, published a book of miscellany titled *Algo de prosa* (1909), which contained some narratives, poetic prose, and essays, as well as some biographies of relevant Filipino characters.

10. Ottmar Ette recalls that the novel, before becoming consolidated as a literary genre, was considered a hybrid, owing to the mixture of genres and languages that it could contain (2008).

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